

Mortuary staff and funeral agents arrested in ICAC probe for suspected corruption

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Fourteen persons, including a number of mortuary workers of the Hospital Authority (HA), were arrested by the ICAC in the past two days (Sunday and Monday) for alleged corruption in handling bodies at the mortuaries.

Arrested in the operation, code-named "Gypsy", were five serving and one former mortuary attendants of two HA hospitals, as well as eight funeral agents.

The ICAC investigation originated from a complaint alleging some mortuary staff were involved in corruption in assisting funeral agents in conducting their business.

Inquiries revealed that the arrested mortuary staff had allegedly accepted monthly bribe payments from a number of funeral agents as rewards for giving preferential treatment to the latter.

It is alleged that to expedite the funeral arrangements, the mortuary staff had allowed the funeral agents to collect bodies outside the operating hours of the mortuary, and dressed up the bodies on behalf of the latter.

One of the arrested mortuary staff was alleged to have received illegal rebates from a funeral agent for referring to the latter family members of the deceased for funeral services.

During the operation, the HA rendered full assistance to the ICAC.

The arrestees have been released on ICAC bail. Inquiries are continuing.